REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 8-13 and 15 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-6, 8, 9, 12 and 13 are amended; claims 7 and 14 are cancelled. Claims 1 and 5 are amended for clarity. Claim 5 is further amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 7. Claims 2-4, 8, 12 and 13 are amended to maintain consistency with their amended base claims. Claims 6 and 9 are amended to correct typographical informalities. No new matter is added.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 7 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to provide antecedent basis for "next sampling." Claim 7 in incorporated into claim 5. Claim 5 is amended in a similar manner to claim 1. Claims 7 and 14 are cancelled. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 5 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Schroeter et al. (JP-A-10-104103) (Schroeter). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The features of claim 7 have been placed into claim 5. Thus, the rejection of claim 5 is moot.

The Office Action fails to assert that any reference discloses a sensor module position specifying means for specifying installed position of the tire having each sensor module mounted thereto, based on receipt signal strength measurement data from each sensor module, as recited in independent claim 9. Neither Schroeter nor Coulthard (to be discussed below) discloses this feature. Thus, claim 9 is patentable over the applied references for at least this reason. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 1-4, 6-8 and 10-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Schroeter in view of Coulthard (U.S. Patent No. 5,825,286). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Schroeter fails to disclose a predetermined number of connection ports for the reception module assigned in advance to each sensor module, as recited in independent claim

1. Schroeter discloses a single receiver with a single port connected through a filter and then through a multiplexer. Schroeter uses the multiplexer to switch between antennas connected to the filter. See, for example, Fig. 1 and paragraphs [0022], [0035] and [0036] of the machine translation of Schroeter.

Further, Schroeter fails to disclose a control means configured to sequentially output at a predetermined sampling time a command data acquisition from a first sensor module, as recited in independent claim 1. While acknowledging that Schroeter fails to disclose details of a control means configured to sequentially output at predetermined sampling time a command data acquisition from a sensor module and next sampling, the Office Action asserts that paragraphs [0029] and [0035] - [0038] regarding these features. Applicants respectfully submit that the Office Action has an incorrect understanding of Schroeter. The period of assessment referred to by the Office Action is disclosed in Schroeter as a section in time where the data from the sensors is evaluated. Schroeter explicitly discloses that the period of assessment is the second half phase of a radio signal where data from the sensors is evaluated. This is not associated with a predetermined sampling time, as recited in independent claim 1. See Schroeter, paragraphs [0027]-[0029].

Still further Schroeter fails to disclose a control means configured to assign the first connection port to the first sensor module for a next sampling, when there is a data input from the first sensor module in response to the command; and assign the command of data acquisition from the first sensor module to a second connection port different from the first connection port, and assign the second connection port to the first sensor module for the next sampling, when there is no data input from the first sensor module even by the command issuance, as recited in independent claim 1. The Office Action apparently relies on Coulthard to disclose the feature of switching antenna assignments when no response is received from the sensor module following a command of data acquisition. The Office

Action asserts that Coulthard discloses a system in which if no reception is made within a programmed period of time from a specific module, an indication is provided to the operator in order of priority. This disclosure of Coulthard does not disclose or suggest assigning a second connection port to the first sensor for the next sampling if no data is received from the first sensor module. Claim 1 has been amended to even more clearly recite this feature.
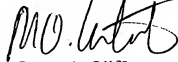
Thus, Schroeter and Coulthard, whether taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose the combination of features recited in independent claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over the applied references.

Independent claims 1, 5 and 9 are patentable over the applied references. Claims 2-4, 6, 8, 10-13 and 15 depend from claims 1, 5 and 9, and therefore are patentable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Thus, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

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